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Viewing cable 07MANAGUA284, MRS LOSES CAUCUS STATUS BUT CONTINUES AS MOST

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#07MANAGUA284**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
07MANAGUA284	2007-01-30 20:38	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

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DE RUEHMU #0284/01 0302038
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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8893
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 000284

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SUBJECT: MRS LOSES CAUCUS STATUS BUT CONTINUES AS MOST
VOCAL OPPOSITION GROUP

REF: MANAGUA 0070

Classified By: Ambassador Paul Trivelli for reasons 1.4 (b and d)

11. (C) Summary: The Sandinista Renovation Movement (MRS) has lost its official status as a caucus in the Nicaraguan National Assembly, but its deputies continue to offer the most vocal opposition to President Daniel Ortega. MRS members are disappointed by the larger Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance's (ALN) apparent lack of resistance to Ortega's legislative assaults, and believe that convicted ex-President and leader of the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC) Arnoldo Aleman is stronger than ever. They also assert that some of the Bolanos era officials were corrupt, but the level of corruption was at its peak during Aleman's presidency and that part of the judiciary's weaknesses are structural. End Summary.

12. (C) During a January 26 cocktail with emboffs, MRS leaders Edmundo Jarquin (former presidential candidate), Dora Maria Tellez (MRS party president), Enrique Saenz (deputy), and Luis Carrion discussed the MRS' role in the National Assembly, the increasing power of Ortega and Aleman, and corruption in the Bolanos administration and the judiciary. The meeting was relaxed and cordial -- including former revolutionary commander Dora Maria Tellez, whose U.S. visa was denied two years ago for terrorist activities during the 1980s.

Plight of the Opposition: Shrinking MRS, Inert ALN
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13. (C) MRS deputy Enrique Saenz confirmed that the party's deputies lost their official caucus status after Mario Valle left the caucus following the elections and Juan Ramon Jimenez was expelled for allegedly "plotting" with the Sandinista Front (FSLN) to exclude Saenz from the Assembly's Executive Board (reftel). (Note: The MRS won five seats in the national elections, but the loss of Valle and Jimenez leaves the party with only three deputies, one short of the four necessary to form a caucus under Assembly rules. End Note.) Saenz explained that the MRS has lost office space and funds for administrative staff, as well as a special salary supplement for the deputies that is used to fund caucus expenses. Tellez insisted that the three remaining deputies will retain their identity as MRS representatives and continue to criticize objectionable actions of the Ortega administration.

14. (C) The MRS leaders expressed their disappointment with the ALN's lack of leadership and vocal opposition to Ortega's legislative assaults -- especially the reforms to the Organic

Law and Law 290 that grant the FSLN more power. Carrion repeated the rumor that Ortega is threatening to support PLC efforts to prosecute ALN leader Eduardo Montealegre for his alleged role in the Cenis (debt bonds) scandal. (Note: During a January 29 meeting with Ambassador, Montealegre asserted that Ortega is not blackmailing him. Montealegre agreed that the ALN should have been more organized and forceful in opposing the Law 290 reforms and explained that an agreement with the PLC not to "fast-track" the reforms fell through at the last minute. End Note.)

Caudillos More Powerful Than Ever

15. (C) The MRS representatives pledged to continue their vocal opposition of Ortega's anti-democratic actions, but are concerned that pact leaders Ortega and Aleman are "more powerful and emboldened than ever." As an example of Ortega's confidence, Carrion noted that he had published the reforms in the official register before the vote in the National Assembly. In addition to the Ley Organica and Law 290 reforms, which grant the FSLN more power over the Assembly and centralized authority over the Executive, Ortega has extended his covert influence over the police and military. According to Tellez, Police Commissioner Carlos Palacios is a corrupt FSLN hard-liner whose role is to keep Police Chief Aminta Granera in line with compromising information he reportedly possesses.

16. (C) Carrion and Tellez agreed that Arnolando Aleman has increased his influence over the PLC and marginalized critics such as Jose Rizo and Jose Antonio Alvarado (the former presidential and vice presidential candidates on the PLC ticket). They noted that "everyone" in the PLC went to pay

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homage to Aleman at his 62nd birthday party on January 23. Carrion and Saenz commented that the opposition forces must organize an "offensive" against the FSLN instead of just reacting and playing defense.

Corruption in the Bolanos Administration and Judiciary

17. (C) When asked about corruption charges against prominent members of the Bolanos administration, Tellez responded that many officials were corrupt, including relatives of the former President. She specifically mentioned the well-publicized cases against former Transportation Minister Pedro Solorzano (a Bolanos confidant) and immigration chief Fausto Carcabelos (married to a Bolanos relative). They all commented, however, that endemic corruption reached its height under the Aleman administration.

18. (C) Tellez responded to a remark by the Ambassador about systematic corruption in the judiciary by stating that much judicial corruption is caused by an organizational defect. In Nicaragua, judges are jointly allocated to a general region instead of being assigned to a specific district. This allows claimants to "shop around" for a sympathetic/bribe-able judge, she explained. Tellez believes that reform efforts are doomed to failure unless structural adjustments occur.

Comment: Aleman's Power

19. (C) While it is true that latter-day Aleman critics Jose Rizo and Jose Antonio Alvarado have been marginalized within the PLC (septel), many in the party rank and file are upset over the PLC's failure in the national elections and the pact-driven accommodation of the FSLN. Aleman's continued influence will depend on the patience of moderate PLC deputies and local leaders to tolerate continued FSLN manipulation and Aleman's success in rigging the upcoming internal PLC elections.

